



qathet REGIONAL DISTRICT

SECTION 2	ADMINISTRATION POLICIES
POLICY	2.11
SUBJECT	GENERAL COMPLAINTS POLICY
ADOPTED	JUNE 27, 2019

POLICY STATEMENT:

The public periodically offers constructive criticism to the Regional District. A formalized process is required to properly track and deal with these occasions.

PURPOSE:

The General Complaints Policy will ensure that public complaints are consistently received, addressed and recorded from receipt through to completion.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Regional District employees, contractors, volunteers, and elected officials.

POLICY/GUIDELINES:

Complaints from the public may arise through different situations and mediums. They may be initiated by telephone calls, in-person, e-mail, text messaging or standard mail to name but a few. As the first point of contact, it is the role of the employee, contractor, volunteer, or elected official to assist the complainant in advancing their concern as professionally and swiftly as possible.

RESPONSIBILITY/AUTHORITY TO ACT:

Each employee, contractor, volunteer, or elected official who receives a complaint has an obligation to ensure that the complaint is addressed according to procedures.

PROCEDURES:

The following procedures are to be followed in the process of handling general complaints.

1. Acknowledge the complainant and their concern.

2. Direct the complainant to the appropriate department.
3. Record complaint on the Complaint Register Form (attached as Appendix A).
4. Advise the complainant that the information is being collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and will only be used for the purposes of addressing the complaint.
5. The reason for recording the complaint is in the off chance that the issue could escalate and the complainant would be compelled to give evidence in a court of law.
6. Recording the complaint does not necessarily mean that the complainant has to write it down; you can scribe over the phone or in-person.
7. Pertinent information to be collected is detailed on the Complaint Register Form.
8. If verbally receiving the complaint, ensure to ask the necessary questions to document this information and to ask/inform the complainant why you are writing down the details.
9. Whenever possible, follow up in writing, by sending an email or letter to the complainant to confirm the verbal conversation.
10. E-mails, text messages and standard mail are acceptable and can be transcribed if necessary; if sufficient, the printed document need only be stapled to the Complaint Register Form with any potential missing data written on the Complaint Register Form.
11. Each department will be responsible to manage and maintain their own Complaint Registry binder.
12. Once the Complaint Register Form is filled out in full (or supplementary documents provide the required information), forward the Complaint Register Form to the appropriate department manager for follow up.
13. Prior to doing so, photocopy the Complaint Register Form in its entirety and file it in the department Complaint Registry Binder.
14. All public complaints shall be handled in a timely and responsive manner by the respective department manager/staff responsible for the service.
15. The complaint investigation will be concluded within thirty (30) days of receipt.
16. The timelines mentioned are only to be used as guidelines. Vacations, competing priorities and unforeseen or extenuating circumstances may interfere and thus the

timelines are not prescriptive. However, by no means are these timelines to be grossly over extended.

17. Interpretation of the nature of the complaint will be crucial.
18. If it is operational in nature then the course of action may be as simple as some research and a telephone call to inform and educate.
19. Always attempt to provide a response based on Regional District Bylaw/Policy or direct the complainant to the appropriate government agency(s) if outside the scope of the Regional District authority.
20. Once performed, the department manager will indicate on the Complaint Register Form what action was taken and indicate that the complaint has been completed.
21. If the complaint is policy based then the action will be more detailed.
22. In the case of a policy based complaint, the department manager will, within seven (7) days of receipt, send a letter to the complainant acknowledging receipt of the complaint.
23. Once the investigation has come to a conclusion, the department manager will write a report for the Board outlining the nature of the complaint, what the investigation produced and any corrective action or subsequent recommendation to be considered.
24. After the Board has received and debated the contents of the report, a letter will be provided to the complainant, under the Chair's signature, informing the complainant what the eventual Board determination was.
25. Upon the letter from the Chair being mailed, the department manager will indicate on the Complaint Register Form what action was taken and indicate that the complaint has been completed.

GENERAL COMPLAINTS REGISTER FORM

COMP 1.0

DATE AND TIME

DATE:	TIME:
COMPLAINT TAKEN BY:	REFERRED TO:

LOCATION IN THE REGIONAL DISTRICT WHERE PROBLEM EXISTS

--

DETAILS OF PROBLEM

COMPLAINANT'S NAME AND ADDRESS

--

COMPLAINANT'S WORK AND/OR HOME PHONE NUMBERS

WORK:	HOME:
-------	-------

E-MAIL:

FOLLOW UP REQUEST:

☐ YES

☐ NO

ACTION TAKEN

The above information is being collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and will only be used for the purpose in which it was collected.